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Dear Mr. Weisberg,

Thanks for the surprise of your new book. I stayed up most of the night to read it, completely fascinated.

Coincidentally, the day your book arrived, my paycheck did also. Enclosed is a money order covering the price. I appreciate your act of faith in sending the book while I was short of cash.

I am working on a paper for my political science class (Watergate) on the subject of secrecy, truth and the restoration of trust. I believe that Watergate is, for the most part, about information. In writing the paper, rather than recite the litany of grossly ilegal acts whixh illustrate the "extreme measures to control information, to get it, or to bottle it up," (Dr. Jerome Weisner), I prefer to view Watergate as symptomatic of the problems this government gets itself into when absurd secrecy practices, public deception and conspiracy become standard operating procedures. Your book relating your experiences with Dr. Rhoads and the Department of Justice(?) confirm that, and I hope to incorporate a bit of what has happened in your case in my conclusion, as an example of what the American people are up against, if they choose to seek the truth.

As you and I both realize, there can be no really solid basis for the restoration of trust in government while the secrecy system, under the phrases "national security, " "Executive privilege," and "investigatory files for use by law enforcement agencies only," continues the phenomena of "the really big American cover-up" (Richard Sprague's expression for the JFK assassination.) Gerald Ford and his post-Watergate government are no more worthy of trust (as you show) than an arsonist in a match factory.

Your legal troubles with the transcript suit illustrate Jim Garrison's explanation of how the warfare state operates at two levels, the lovable and the practical. The passage of the Freedom of Information Act is an operation performed at the lovable level. The actual obstruction, deceit, dirty tricks and Orwellian doubletalk you encountered was conducted on the practical level.

Though there is ample reason to be bitter, the forces on the side of truth may have a second chance, especially with the spectro suit, and commission documents supplied to the Archives by the CIA and FBI. A recent amendment to the Freedom of Information Act passed over Ford's veto enables the plaintiff filing suit for a contested document to have the document's contents examined <u>in camera</u>-privately- by the court to determine whether they should be withheld under the exemptions defined in the act. The court will now be able to critically question the executive's decision to classify a particular document. According

to the House Operations Committee report on the amendment bill, a court " may look at the reasonablness or propriety of the determination to classify the records under the terms of the executive order." The burden of proof for the necessity of keeping the FBI, CIA documents classified for "national security" reasons is on the agency involved. If a fairly open-minded, liberal judge were sitting in on a case involving Archive documents, the outcome could be favorable to assassination researchers. I think that we must at least have another test case. Will you try again, for the rest of us, since you have had some experience? If you feel that it's a waste of your time and effort, I will find legal assisteance and file suit for specific documents of interst to myself and the newly formed interest group I represent, the San Francisco Citizens Investigating Political Assassinations.

However, I would rather see an old hand at it than novices like ourselves. Please let me know if you intend to do anything in the legal area under the Freedom of Information Act (revised).

There is much I would like to discuss with you, but for the moment I should end this, and just get it off to you.

Again, much thanks for the book. It is very useful. I have read and loaned out Whitewash I and II, but have never read Photographic Whitewash or Frameup. I will order them, especially PW, when I get another paycheck.

Sincerely yours,

Garrett Timmermans

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P.S. Our group is starting a Congressional petition campaign for a new JFK investigation, while I am showing a pretty good copy of the Zapruder film to classes and interested parties.